Health and Welfare of Child

1841. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: SHRI VIJAYJ.DARDA SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per experts who deliberated at the two day National Consultation on Priorities for Children recently organized by the Planning Commission and UNICEF, the child health and welfare scenario is dismal, with the country nowhere dose to achieving the targets set in the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, what strategy Government propose to evolve to remedy the situation in the remaining period of the Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) No Sir. In the National Consultation on "Priorities of Children in the Eleventh Plan" organized jointly by the Planning Commission and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with the support of Institute of Human Development (IHD), New Delhi, on January 18-19, 2006, the experts expressed their concern regarding slow progress in achieving seme of the goals for children. It may be mentioned that the Consultation held was basically to get inputs for the Working Group on Children for the 11th Five Year Plan.

It may further be mentioned that it would not be entirely appropriate to say that in regard to the Tenth Plan Targets for health and welfare of children, the scenario has been dismal. The recently completed Mid Term Appraisal (MTA) of the Tenth Plan shows that there has been good progress in achieving some monitorable goats for children. There is reduction in the number of out of school children from 42 million at the beginning of plan period to 8.1 milllion in September 2004 as a result of enrolment drive launched during the second year of Tenrn Plan. Similarly, gender gap in literacy, which started narrowing in the 90s La. by coming

down to 21.59% in 2001 from 24.85% in 1991, is expected to narrow down further by the end of the Tenth Plan. The total literacy rate has also improved significantly from 52.21 % in 1991 to 64.84% in 2001 and it is expected to achieve the Tenth Plan target of literacy rate of 75% by 2007. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has also been on the decline i.e. from 72 per 1000 births in 1998 to 60 in 2003 and is expected to decline further.

Bharat Nirman Programme

1842. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal has been formulated to create a "specific financing window" for the Rs. 1.74 lakh crore Bharat Nirman Programme through the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its present status;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the model of delivery involves the Panchayats and the private sector as partners to speed up implementation of the programme for enhancement and management of the rural infrastructure; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) No Sir. In his budget speech for 2006-07, the Finance Minister has proposed opening of a separate window under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund XII for rural roads with a corpus of Rs. 4000 cr. during 2006-07.

(c) and (d) While the private sector is not expected to participate significantly in Bharat Nirman, involvement of Panchayats is central to the programme. The Panchayat's involvement will be in areas like identification of beneficiaries, maintenance & operation of assets and in certain cases the implementation also.